

wings, to her lover's arms at last. Adversity
 dogged her
 to the close: she caught small-pox just before
 her marriage
 should have taken place, and with it lost
 her beauty; but
 on Christmas Day, 1654, she and Temple
 were wedded in
 St. Giles'-in-the-Fields.

For us it is not quite such a happy ending;
 for with it
 end her letters also, except for a few stray
 ones of minor
 interest. But before we leave her
 correspondence, a word
 may be said of its merely literary qualities;
 for every time
 I read her, I am struck afresh by these. They
 matter less,
 indeed, than the personality they reveal, one
 of the most
 lovable in all literature; but her character
 we learn once
 for all, her gift of language is a perpetual
 surprise.

Enough has been quoted to show her
 power; but it is
 worth concentrating for a moment on this
 matter of
 pure style, and her ideas about it. These are
 definite

enough, 'In my opinion these great scholars
 are not the
 best writers (of letters, I mean); of books
 perhaps they
 are. I never had, I think, but one letter from
 Sir Justinian,
 but't was worth twenty of anybody's else to
 make me
 sport. It was the most sublime nonsense
 that in my life
 I ever read; and yet, I believe, he descended
 as low as he
 could to come near my weak understanding.

'All
 letters, methinks,' says she, 'should be free
 and easy as
 one's discourse; not studied as an oration,
 nor made up of
 hard words like a charm. 'Tis an admirable

thing, to see
how some people will labour to find out
terms that may
obscure a plain sense. Like a gentleman I
knew, who
would never say "the weather grew cold",
but that
"winter began to salute us". I have no
patience for such
coxcombs, and cannot blame an old uncle
of mine that

which makes pleasantly ironic reading: 'Jan* 13,
Friday morninge.
I came to Chicksands before dinner. I found Mr.
Temple here and
my sister broke with him. God be praised.'